

**Meeting Minutes for Historic District and Historical Commission
Town Hall Griffin Room
Wednesday, July 1, 2015 5:30 PM**

Call to Order at 5:35 PM by Gayle Carroll, Co- Chair

**Present: Bob Bradley, Gayle Carroll, Barbara Dowd, Eileen Brady, Mirande Dewitt, Pat Scarnici, Jeanne Steiner, Marie Carlson, Board Clerk
Michael Ford, representative for Stephen and Patricia Ford**

**Gayle Carroll: Agenda read and presents continued case-
HH2015-08 Notice of Intent (NOI)** to Demolish a structure over 100 years old has been received for property located at 7 South Street, Map 14, Parcel N4, in the C-V and R-M Zones pursuant to the Code of the Town of Harwich §131-8. The Applicant proposes a partial (25' x 17' SF±) demolition of the c. 1813 home. Owners, Stephen and Patricia Ford.

Gayle Carroll: Addressing Mr. Ford: We would like the applicant to present the case in its entirety even if it was previously presented before. This will be for the benefit of any member that may not have been in attendance for every hearing.
This will allow the Commission to move forward with a possible vote this evening.

Mr. Ford: Responds yes and reads the Notice of Intent describing all of the details of the case as he has presented them. Went over meeting of May 20th, revisiting that the structure is over 100 years old. The original plan was to demolish the L portion, a 25' X 17' kitchen and dining area. The commission was presented with the plans for the proposed addition and plans changing the elevation of the roof line, pictures of the existing dwelling presented.

Mr. Ford revisited the timeline involving a site visit on May 28, 2015 by a number of the board members, giving them the opportunity to see the house inside and out with the owner Stephen Ford being available for discussion. Case was continued to June 3, 2015 to allow for more input from committee members and professional advisors retained by the applicants. Much discussion took place during the continued case date of June 3, 2015. (minutes were available for referral) Continuing his presentation Mr. Ford pointed out several times that although the owners preferred to save as much of the structure as possible, he had documentation from the owners engineer and architect that the entire home was not in a position to be rehabilitated. Owners wanted to be upfront that more demolition may be necessary than originally proposed based on the findings of their engineer/architect/consultants. Owners have proposed a new elevation for South Street. Their architect/engineer proposed rather than demo only the L portion, (understanding the dwelling was built in parts) the portion to the right of the door be demolished and the portion to the left will be saved. The applicants hope is to act on this application tonight. Mr. Ford feels the process has worked, causing the applicants to take a hard long look at what was proposed. Given their architect has told them it should be a complete tear-down, the owners had wanted to restore the inside and not ignore the concerns of the committee. Feels the committee has worked with the applicants to reach a decision avoiding a demo delay.

Eileen Brady: agrees applicant sought partial demo, and co-operated with bringing forth requested clarification and documentation

Mirande DeWitt: comments she agrees that the structure may not be as historically significant as others but its presence will be missed. It appears to be going from simple to elaborate, not a re-vamp and not saving the building.

Jeanne Steiner: understands the structural issues but proposed seems new

Michael Ford: The proposed structure is identical to the one across the street. It is a goal to make it a replica, although it is not in the Historic District.

Bob Bradley: The committee has no jurisdiction on what gets put up to replace demolitions. There is a problem because structures are being bought for demo purposes, not restorations. This is happening every month and it is discouraging for the committee that historic buildings are not being restored. Engineers give statements not with restoration in mind.

Eileen Brady: Do engineers report on costs?

Bob Bradley: Notice of Intent applications should request estimates for repairs, materials. This has been a problem for 10 years. The information given is limited; the applicants don't want to spend the money to restore historic properties. Applications could enforce a request to have something to compare the cost issue.

Eileen Brady: Health and safety issues would trump

Bob Bradley: Looked at beams, thought the structure was in better condition than was being presented, and realizes the cost to restore. The house now presented shows the scale has totally changed. It has lost the domestic modesty of a Cape Cod house.

Michael Ford: Points out engineers report and reinforces owner still want to preserve a portion of the original structure.

Bob Bradley: The second floor addition is new.

Mirande DeWitt: Would like a clarification of the new plan. It appears that only a shell remains, and not the original façade.

Michael Ford: The owners will just take it down.

Bob Bradley: Is a full demo now proposed? There are no clear dimensions to the drawings. How high is the roofline? What material is it made of?

Gayle Carroll: Does the application for the partial demo now need to be changed:

Michael Ford: The house will be lifted and a new foundation will be for the part to remain.

Again they are attempting to save part of the structure.

Gayle Carroll: There is an alteration to the original application. Add to the record new information has been presented. We need to vote on the partial demolition. Any further changes will require a new application.

Mirande DeWitt: comments it appears to be a full demolition in her eyes, technically

Eileen Brady: If north of the door is not removed, how is that a full demo?

Michael Ford: What is before you is to raise part of the structure to remain and put it back down on new foundation. Points out window replacement, and the vinyl siding will be removed.

Jeanne Steiner: Vote to allow the demo and request notification of any further changes

Gayle Carroll: The drawings show no measurements, drawing is illustrative. Any further demo requires applicants to come back. We should make a motion to vote. Move to allow partial demo with the understanding that the Northwest portion of the structure will remain, and any further demolition will require the applicants to come back with a new application.

Eileen Brady: seconded

Mirande DeWitt: abstained

Bob Bradley: abstained

Four in favor, two abstained, vote passes

Gayle Carroll: We appreciate the applicant's cooperation and returning with what was requested. Michael Ford thanks committee and leaves.

Bob Bradley: comments that the Board has got to, in the future require additional documents. The only control to keep the scale is to force acceptance of the historic buildings they are buying. Real estate tells people they can tear these homes down. We are fighting the system.

Continued discussion on possible changes to the application, put out brochure to real estate people concerning the importance of maintaining the historic quality of the town.

Eileen Brady: points out history of the Exchange Building and its demise, refers to Bob Doane's report that scrap value was greater than historic value at the time.

Bob Bradley: comments on library, and well known discrepancy on variety of changes, suggests Ginny Hewitt meet with the commission feeling the commission is not being taken seriously.

General comments and discussion by members:

Discussion on the importance of setting up meetings with liaison, Jannell Brown and to invite Building Commissioner, Parks and Recreation representative, Highway department head, realtors, Chamber of Commerce to general meetings. A schedule should be created to request attendance at all meetings by Jannell Brown as liaison to the Board of Selectmen. Goals of economic development vs. historical preservation should be visited, case in point Brooks Park issue.

Lou Urbano: comments on Albrow House improvements and efforts of the Historical Commission deserving recognition for its efforts, asks for input on ways to raise funds, acquire donations. Next volunteer phase, can anyone wallpaper? Is it historically correct? Chairman of Board of Selectman is painting the ceiling.

Gayle Carroll: any further questions, concerns, shall we adjourn?

Eileen Brady: makes Motion to adjoin

Bob Bradley: Seconded

Motion carried, adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Carlson
Executive Assistant, Building

Adopted on: March 16, 2016